

ARTICLE XXXII

SIGNS

SECTION 32.00 INTENT

To provide for the control and regulation of signs so as to promote the general welfare and safety of the public, and to recognize the aesthetics of land use, the following provisions concerning the erection and maintenance of signs will be construed to effect the foregoing.

SECTION 32.01 PERMITS REQUIRED

It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, alter, or relocate within the Township any sign or other advertising structure as defined herein, without first obtaining a sign permit from the Administrator and making payment of the fee required by Section 32.4 hereof.

SECTION 32.02 APPLICATION FOR SIGN PERMIT

Application for erection permits shall be made upon forms provided by the Administrator, and shall contain or have attached thereto the following information:

1. Name, address and telephone number of applicant.
2. Location of building, structure, or lot to which or upon which the sign or other advertising structure is to be attached or erected.
3. Position of the sign or other advertising structure in relation to nearby buildings or structures.
4. A sketch or scale drawing with dimensions of the plans and specifications and method of construction and attachment to the building or in the ground.
5. Name of person, firm, or corporation erecting sign.
6. Written consent of the owner of the building, structure, or lot to which or on which the sign is to be erected.
7. Insurance policy or bond as required by Section 32.10.
8. Such other information as the Administrator shall require to establish conformance with this section.

SECTION 32.03 PERMIT ISSUED IF APPLICATION IN ORDER

It shall be the duty of the Zoning Administrator, upon the filing of an application for a sign erection permit to examine such plans and specifications and other data and the premises upon which it is proposed to erect the sign, and if it appears that the proposed structure meets all Ordinance and zoning requirements, issue the permit. The Zoning Administrator shall file his written approval or recommendation, as the case may be, within fifteen (15) days of the receipt by him of a fully completed application. If the work authorized under an erection permit is not completed within six (6) months after the date of issuance; the said permit shall become null and void. If the Administrator shall refuse to issue any permit after application is made, then and in that case, applicant shall be entitled, upon payment of an appeal fee, to appeal such ruling of the Zoning Administrator to the Board of Appeals for full hearing.

SECTION 32.04 PERMIT FEES

Every applicant, before being granted a permit hereunder, shall pay to the Zoning Administrator, who shall remit such sum to the Township Treasurer, a permit fee for each such sign or advertising structure regulated by the Ordinance. The permit fee schedule shall be as set by the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting.

SECTION 32.05 INSPECTION

The Zoning Administrator may inspect every two (2) years, or at such times as he deems necessary any sign or other advertising structure regulated by the Ordinance for the purpose of determining whether it is secure or insecure, and whether it is in need of repair or removal.

SECTION 32.06 PERMIT REVOCABLE AT ANY TIME

All rights and privileges acquired under this Ordinance or any amendment are revocable at any time for cause by the Solon Township Board; and all such permits shall contain this provision.

SECTION 32.07 UNSAFE AND UNLAWFUL SIGNS

If the Zoning Administrator shall find that any sign or other advertising structure regulated herein is unsafe or insecure or is a menace to the public, or has been constructed or erected, or is being maintained in violation of the provision of this Ordinance, he shall give written notice to the applicant thereof. If the applicant fails to remove or alter the structure so as to comply with the standards herein set forth within ten (10) days after such notice, such sign or other advertising structure may be removed or altered to comply by the Zoning Administrator at the expense of the applicant or owner of the lot upon which it is located. The Zoning Administrator shall refuse to issue a permit to any applicant or owner who refuses to pay costs so assessed. The Zoning Administrator may cause any sign or other advertising structure which is an immediate peril to persons or property to be removed summarily and without notice.

SECTION 32.08 REMOVAL OF CERTAIN SIGNS

Any sign now or hereafter existing which no longer advertises a bona fide business conducted, or a project sold, shall be taken down and removed by the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the lot, building or structure upon which such sign may be found within thirty (30) days after written notification from the Administrator, and upon failure to comply with such notice within the time specified in such order, the Zoning Administrator is hereby authorized to cause removal of such sign, and any expense incident thereto shall be paid by the owner of the lot, building or structure to which such sign is attached.

SECTION 32.09 SIGNS ALLOWED IN ALL DISTRICTS

These signs shall be allowed in all districts without permit, provided that said signs are safe, and are not in violation of other sections of this Ordinance or other local, state or federal regulations.

1. Real estate signs not exceeding five (5) square feet in area which advertise the sale, rental, or lease of the premises upon which said signs are located. Said signs shall not bear any notations as to the completion of sale or rental, and shall be removed within

- seven (7) days of any sale or rental, or upon the expiration of any listing agreement for sale or rental purposes. Further, said signs shall not be illuminated.
2. Bulletin boards not over twelve (12) square feet in area for public, charitable or religious institutions when the same are located on the premises of said institutions.
 3. Temporary signs denoting the architect, engineer, or contractor when placed upon work under construction, and not exceeding twelve (12) square feet in area, and without illumination. Such signs shall be removed within fifteen (15) days of the completion of such construction or within five (5) days of occupancy, whichever shall first occur.
 4. Occupational signs denoting only the name and profession of an occupant in a dwelling and not exceeding three (3) square feet. If sign is freestanding, must be located twenty (20) feet or more from the edge of the road right of way.
 5. Memorial signs or tablets, names of building, and date of erection when cut into any masonry surface or when constructed of bronze, when approved by the Solon Township Board.
 6. Traffic or other municipal signs, legal notices, railroad warning signs, danger, and such temporary, emergency, or non-advertising signs as may be approved by the Solon Township Board.
 7. On-premises homemade or commercial signs advertising items for sale by the lot owner where such owner is not engaged in the retail sales of items in the ordinary course of business, such as a sign denoting "garage sale". Such temporary signs to qualify hereunder may not be displayed for more than six (6) days in any sixty (60) day period, shall be carefully placed so as not to obstruct traffic view, shall not be illuminated, and shall not be more than six (6) square feet in area. On no more than two (2) single faces, or one double face sign shall be permitted hereunder on the premises.
 8. Signs indicating a political party or candidate for public office, provided that such signs do not exceed twelve (12) square feet in area; provided further such signs shall not be displayed, under this exemption, more than thirty (30) days prior to any scheduled primary election, and the signs shall be removed within ten (10) days after general election day. Said signs shall not be illuminated.
 9. Such temporary signs placed in business windows, limited to announcing of bona fide sales or specials of said business, provided such signs conform to the requirements of this Ordinance, except that they need not be of permanent materials. And provided further that all such signs exempt hereunder shall be removed at the end of the sale or within two (2) calendar weeks of their initial posting, whichever shall first occur.
 10. Such non-advertising signs, not exceeding three (3) square feet, as may be used for onsite direction as to entrances, exits and toilet facilities and such other non-advertising signs indicating restricted areas for fishing, hunting and the like.
 11. Family name or Farm name placed on a barn or pole building, should be in proportion to the face of that building. According to Table 2.
 12. All State or County approved Historical signs for farms or buildings.

SECTION 32.10 BOND REQUIREMENTS

Every applicant for a permit referred to herein shall, before the permit is granted, file with the Zoning Administrator, a continuing liability insurance policy issued by an insurance company authorized to do business in the State of Michigan conforming to this section in the amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), executed by the applicant and a surety company to be approved by the Township Attorney and continued for the faithful observance of the provisions of this Ordinance and all amendments thereto, and of all laws and ordinances relating to signs

and other advertising structures, and which shall indemnify and save harmless the Township from any and all damages, judgments, costs or expenses which the said Township may incur or suffer by reason of the granting of said permit. Any person lawfully maintaining a sign or other advertising structure regulated by this Ordinance at the time of the enactment of this Ordinance shall, within thirty (30) days after said enactment, comply with all the provisions set forth in this section.

SECTION 32.11 OBSTRUCTIONS OR HAZARDS

1. No sign shall be erected, relocated, or maintained so as to prevent free ingress or egress from any door, window, or fire escape. No sign of any kind shall be attached to a standpipe or fire escape.
2. No sign or other advertising structure as regulated by this Ordinance shall be erected at the intersection of any streets in such a manner as to obstruct free and clear vision; or at any location where, by reason of the position, shape, or color, it may interfere with, obstruct the view of or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device; or which makes use of the words "stop", "look", "drive-in", "danger", or any other words, phrases, symbols, or characters in such manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse traffic.

SECTION 32.12 GENERAL CRITERIA

1. Each sign erected pursuant to this Ordinance must be of professional quality, constructed of permanent materials, and kept in good repair as to the structure and paint to insure safety. Every sign shall be well anchored to a permanent structure or sunk to a depth in the ground sufficient to insure stability.
2. No advertising signs shall be permitted on or adjacent to buildings or dwellings except in zones designated "commercial". The provisions of this section do not apply to the signs listed in Section 32.9 or as designated in Table 2 (page 103).
3. Each sign which is artificially illuminated shall have the light source properly shielded from the direct vision of individuals using adjacent roadways or sidewalks to insure traffic safety and shall conform to State electrical standards. Any lighting shall conform to the requirements of Section 24.07 of the Township Zoning Ordinance.
4. Each sign shall only advertise products and/or services available on the premises at which the sign is placed; provided, however, that no more than one (1) maximum three (3) square feet additional sign, indicating direction or route only, lettering to be white on green background, and not of an advertising nature, may be permitted at various places in any district only upon application to the Zoning Administrator, and approved thereby. Each such sign, if so approved, shall require a permit pursuant to the terms and provision of this section.
5. Every projecting or overhanging sign shall be placed to provide a clearance of ten (10) feet above the public sidewalk or other area over which it is erected, and shall not extend a distance greater than ten (10) feet from the permanent structure to which it is attached. All free-standing signs, or those supported by posts or buildings of any nature, shall not project into the road right-of-way or easement therefore, and shall be located a minimum of ten(10) feet from the edge of adjacent road right-of-way.
6. The maximum allowable sign area, number and height limitations, are as indicated in the attached Table 2 (page 103), which is made a part hereof.
7. Sign height shall be measured from the highest point of the sign or support structure to a

line parallel to the elevation of the crown of the road serving as frontage for the property or the crown of the road closest to the sign in the case of property fronting on more than one road.

8. The measurement of the area of a sign shall be the minimum area of a parallelogram, ellipse triangle, or circle which is capable of containing the graphics, symbols, address numbers and/or written copy. Not to be included in the measurement of sign area are embellishments such as pole covers, framing, decorative roofing, support embellishments, however, address numbers may be included on such embellishments such numbers shall not be included in the area.
9. Neither the repainting nor refinishing of a legal non-conforming sign nor the changing of the business name of such sign shall cause the sign to lose legal non-conforming status. However, changing the use of the property (Example: Retail to office) would result in losing such non-conforming status.
10. Property address numbers no greater than eight inches high, that are placed on the supporting structure of a sign shall not be considered part of the "sign face" for area calculations.

TABLE 2: SIGN PROVISIONS; SEE TABLE CHART (page 103)

1. The provisions of this Table do not apply to exempted signs noted in Section 32.9 or as provided in Section 32.12(4).
2. Signs may be double faced, but only the greater face shall be measured in determining size.
3. Type 5 signs shall be allowed only by application to, and approval by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission, if referred by the Zoning Administrator, subject to the following criteria:
 - A. The necessity for any such sign shall be demonstrated by the applicant.
 - B. The dimensions of Type 5 signs shall be proportionate to other signs in the surrounding area.
 - C. The aesthetic aspects of the proposed sign location shall be considered, and any proposed sign should not unduly disturb the same.
4. Where several distinct businesses, as evidence by separate entrances or store fronts, are located on one common site or under one roof, each of said businesses may, on that portion of the building or site occupied by it, construct a Type 3 sign of no more than 12 square feet and a Type 4 sign of no more than 24 square feet. The limitation of one Type 1 or Type 5 sign per common site shall continue to apply.
5. An identification sign shall contain nothing except the name of the business, type of business, the address of the business and the business logo, but shall not contain brand names.

SECTION 32.13 PROHIBITIONS

1. No signs, either advertising or otherwise, which include a sequence of flashing lights or create a flashing effect, shall be permitted in any district.
2. No signs, either advertising or otherwise, which are animated or project an animated

Signs: Table Two

Type	District	Maximum Size Sq. Feet	Maximum height above ground	Maximum allowable No. per common site
1	Residential or Commercial	32	10	1 Free standing sign carrying an advertising or identification of any sort.
2	Agricultural	32	10	1 One commercial sign per individually owned farm, where a business for profit is conducted.
3	Agricultural, Residential or Commercial	12	12	1 One identification sign, attached to building.
4	Commercial	32	25	1 Any commercial sign, carrying an advertising message attached to or part of a commercial building.
5	Other Commercial	32	10	Any sign designating a plaza, subdivision, park, condominium, planned unit development, or the like, being of an identification nature, or temporary real estate sales sign for the development
		24	10	1 To identify office complex when there is more than one business
		32	10	1 To identify a shopping center.

Total area of all signs on any wall shall not exceed 20% of the area of such wall, and shall not exceed 100 Sq. feet. Height will not exceed building height.

- picture, shall be permitted in any district.
3. No pennant flags, streamers, balloons, over-the-street banners, or other such material used for advertising purposes shall be permitted, except during Fourth of July, Polka Festival week celebrations, Christmas season, general, public holiday occasions, and Grand Opening's for a new business for a fifteen day period, or other times approved by the Township Board.
 4. No portable or other easily movable signs shall be permitted in any district, subject to the exceptions of Section 32.9.
 5. No signs, either advertising or otherwise, shall be permitted to be placed or painted upon trees or rocks.
 6. No pediment, parasite or accessory signs shall be secured to any other sign.
 7. No sign, either advertising or otherwise shall display any obscene, indecent or immoral matter.
 8. No searchlights shall be directed into the sky to advertise business.

SECTION 32.14 EXISTING NONCONFORMING SIGNS

1. It is the intent of this Section to permit the continuance of a lawful use of any sign or billboard existing as the effective date of this Ordinance, although such sign or billboard may not conform to the provisions of this Ordinance. It is the intent of this Section that nonconforming signs and billboards shall not be enlarged upon, expanded, or extended. Further, it is the intent of this Section that nonconforming signs and billboards shall be gradually eliminated and terminated upon their natural deterioration or accidental destruction. The continuance of all nonconforming signs and billboards within Solon Township shall be subject to the conditions and requirements set forth in this Section. Any existing non-conforming sign or signs, must be registered with the Solon Township Zoning Administrator within sixty (60) days of the enactment of this ordinance. Any sign not registered, will be a zoning violation.
2. The faces, supports, or other parts of any nonconforming sign or billboard shall not be structurally changed, altered, substituted, or enlarged unless the resultant changed, altered, substituted, or enlarged sign or billboard conforms to the provision of this Article for the district in which it is located, except as otherwise provided for in this Section.
3. Nothing in this Section shall prohibit the repair, reinforcement, alteration, improvement, or modernization of a lawful nonconforming sign or billboard, provided that such repair, reinforcement, alteration, improvement, and modernizing do not exceed an aggregate cost of thirty (30) percent of the appraised replacement cost of the sign or billboard, as determined by the Zoning Administrator, unless the subject sign or billboard is changed by such repair, reinforcement, alteration, improvement, or modernization to a conforming structure. Nothing in this shall prohibit the periodic change of message on any billboard.
4. Any lawful nonconforming sign or billboard damaged by fire, explosion, or an act of God, or by other accidental causes, may be restored, rebuilt or repaired, provided that the estimated expense of reconstruction does not exceed thirty (30) percent of the appraised replacement cost thereof, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
5. Whenever the activity, business, or usage of a primary premises to which a sign is attached or related has been discontinued for a period of ninety (90) days or longer, such discontinuance shall be considered conclusive evidence of an intention to abandon legally the nonconforming sign attached to the premises. At the end of this period of abandonment, the Zoning Administrator shall give notice to the person responsible for the nonconforming sign that said sign shall either be removed or altered to conform with

the provisions of this Article within thirty (30) days.

6. The Township Board may acquire any nonconforming sign or billboard, with or without acquiring the property on which such sign or structure is located, by condemnation or other means, and may remove such sign or structure.

SECTION 32.15 REVOCATION OF PERMITS

The Zoning Administrator is hereby authorized and empowered to revoke a permit issued by him upon failure of the holder thereof to comply with any provision of this Ordinance.

SECTION 32.16 PENALTIES

Any person violating any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be punishable as provided in Article XX.

SECTION 32.17 BILLBOARDS

1. Intent
 - A. To allow Solon Township to regulate the height, size, display area, setback, lighting, and distances between billboards, and other regulatory powers pursuant to Act 153 of 1990, in order to control outdoor advertising along federal aid trunk line highways.
 - B. To allow billboards for the purposes of outdoor advertising, that provides information, identification, and/or direction, without jeopardizing the beauty of the natural landscape or disrupting the environment of historically significant features or sites.
 - C. To allow signage which is appropriate, proportional, and in scale with adjacent uses and roadways, and which is compatible with the character of the community.
 - D. To insure compatibility with rural lands, neighborhoods, and business areas, in order to protect land values, thereby enhancing the image of the community for residents, tourists and visitors.
2. Permitted Billboards - Billboards along M-72 shall be restricted to properties zoned Commercial.
3. Property Qualifications - The parcel on which the billboard is to be located shall be vacant, in that there are no other business, industrial or residential uses on said parcel.
4. Setbacks - All billboards must be set back a minimum of 50 feet from all property lines.
5. Lighting - No billboard shall be illuminated.
6. Spacing - There shall be a minimum horizontal spacing of 2640 feet between any billboards on either side of highway.
7. Size and Height
 - A. A billboard may not exceed 32 square feet in area, and no billboard shall be longer than four times its height. The area of the billboard shall be determined by circumscribing the exterior limits of each display erected on one billboard structure, including the background but not supporting features or roof like covers with the smallest square, rectangle, triangle, circle, parallelogram, or trapezoid, that will connect all extreme points of the billboard display and including voids, unused space, or air spaces between multiple display features.
 - B. The square foot area measurement shall be based on one display face, but both sides of the billboard face may be used for advertising purposes without increasing the area of the billboard. Parallel billboard faces shall not be separated by more than four (4)

- feet. V-type billboard faces shall not exceed an inside angle of 45 degrees. Otherwise, the second face shall be counted as another billboard.
- C. The maximum height of each billboard shall be 10 feet, measured from the existing grade at the base of the sign to the top of the sign structure.
8. Prohibited Billboards - The following types of billboards shall not be permitted:
- A. A billboard within 500 feet of any residential district, historic district, park, school, church, hospital, retirement home, cemetery, or government building.
 - B. A billboard that is stacked, tiered, stepped, or placed next to or along side of any other billboard or sign.
 - C. Billboards containing flashing, intermittent, changing, or moving lights or sequential reflectorized lettering or parts, and billboards with moving or revolving parts or messages.
 - D. Billboards affixed to trees, rocks, shrubs, fences, utility poles and/or natural features.
 - E. A billboard which would, by its erection, destroy significant natural vegetation and/or cause significant existing vegetation to be removed.
 - F. Billboards utilizing vehicles, trucks, vans, or other wheeled devices, or tripods, sandwich boards, or changeable message boards.
 - G. Attached advertising devices such as banners, balloons, flags, pennants, pinwheels, windsocks, searchlights and/or other devices with similar characteristics.
 - H. A billboard mounted on or over the roof of a building.
 - I. A billboard located within 500 feet of a residential, commercial, industrial, or agricultural use on the same property.
 - J. Billboards which may otherwise be prohibited by any other laws, ordinances or regulations.